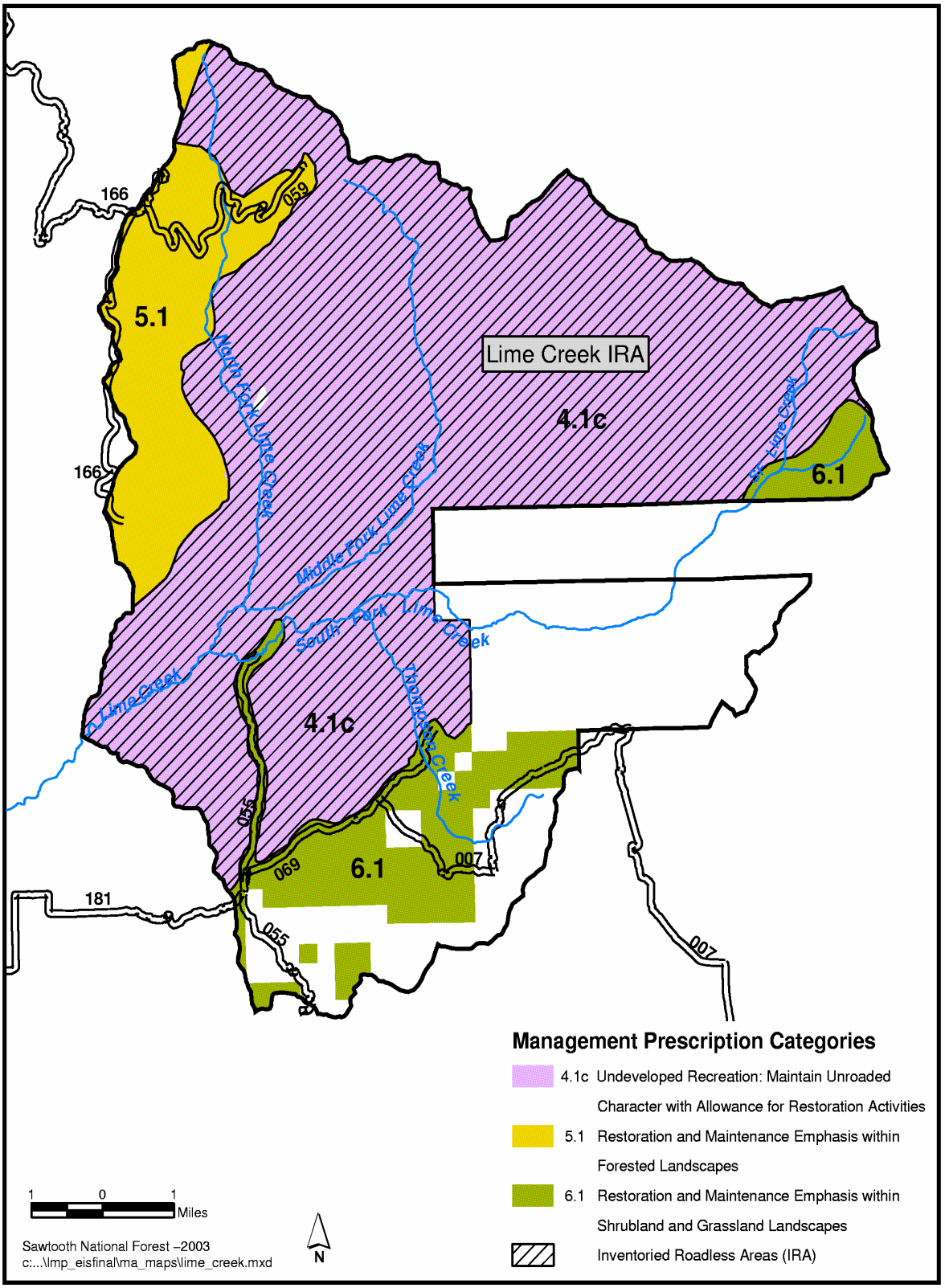
Management Area 09 –Lime Creek Location Map



Management Area 9
Lime Creek

MANAGEMENT AREA DESCRIPTION

Management Prescriptions - Management Area 9 has the following management prescriptions (see map on preceding page for distribution of prescriptions).

Management Prescription Category (MPC)	Percent of Mgt. Area
4.1c – Maintain Unroaded Character with Allowance for Restoration Activities	76
5.1 – Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Forested Landscapes	12
6.1 – Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland & Grassland Landscapes	12

General Location and Description - Management Area 9 is comprised of Forest Service administered lands in the Lime Creek drainage in the southwest corner of the Fairfield Ranger District (see map, preceding page). The area lies in Camas and Elmore Counties, and is an estimated 52,700 acres, including several small private land inholdings that make up about 4 percent of the area, and a large block of state land that makes up about 12 percent of the area. These inholdings are located in the southern and eastern portions of the management area. The area is bordered by the Sawtooth National Forest to the north and northeast, the Boise National Forest to the west, and a mix of BLM, State, and private lands to the south and southeast. The primary uses and activities in this management area are livestock grazing, dispersed motorized recreation, and timber management.

Access - The main access to the area from the south is by Forest Road 055 to the Hunter Creek Trailhead, or from the west via Boise Forest Road 166 to a number of logging roads in the North Fork drainage. Almost all of the roads in this area are rough and native-surfaced. Several roads have been closed to public motorized access during hunting season over the past two decades to reduce big game (primarily elk) vulnerability. The density of classified roads is an estimated 0.7 miles per square mile, with many of the roads concentrated in the upper North Fork and South Fork Lime Creek drainages. The remaining area is predominantly unroaded. Total road density for area subwatersheds ranges between 0 and 1.3 miles per square mile. A good network of trails exists in the roadless portion of the area.

Special Features - A portion of the Lime Creek Inventoried Roadless Area comprises an estimated 65 percent of the management area.

Air Quality - This management area lies within Montana/Idaho Airshed ID-21 and Elmore and Camas Counties. Particulate matter is the primary pollutant of concern related to Forest management. The closest ambient air monitors are located in Idaho City and Mountain Home. These are used to obtain current background levels, trends, and seasonal patterns of particulate matter. The Sawtooth Wilderness is the closest Class I area. Visibility monitoring has been expanded for this area.

Between 1995 and 1999, emissions trends in Elmore County improved for PM 10, while PM 2.5 emissions remained constant. The PM 10 trend for Camas County was also improving. The PM 2.5 trend for Camas County indicated improvement; however, annual emissions were increasing. The discrepancy in PM 2.5 trend was due to a peak year of emissions caused by wildfires. The most common source of particulate matter in the counties was fugitive dust from unpaved roads and agricultural activities such as tilling. In addition to Forest management activities, crop residue and ditch burning may contribute to particulate matter emissions. The amount of burning for agricultural was moderately low (about 5,000 acres) in Elmore County, and low in Camas County (about 3,000 acres). Elmore County was the only county that had point sources within the airshed. However, the contribution of to the annual PM 2.5 emissions total was minor.

Soil, Water, Riparian, and Aquatic Resources - Elevations range from around 5,000 feet on Lime Creek to 9,694 feet atop Iron Mountain. Management Area 9 is in two major subsections, Soldier Mountain Foothills and Pioneer Foothills. These subsections feature a mixture of glaciated mountains, fluvial mountains, and depositional lands. Slope gradients range between 45 to 70 percent in the fluvial mountains, from 70 percent to vertical in the volcanic scarp slopes, and 0 to 35 percent in the basalt plains and depositional lands. The surface geology is a combination of Idaho batholith granitics and volcanic basalts. Soils generally have moderate to high surface erosion potential, and soil productivity is moderate. Subwatershed vulnerability ratings range from moderate to high (see table below). Geomorphic Integrity ratings for the subwatersheds vary from moderate (functioning at risk) to low (not functioning appropriately), with the majority being moderate (see table below). Localized areas have impacts from roads, livestock grazing, and dispersed recreation. These impacts include accelerated erosion, as well as stream bank and channel modification.

The management area comprises a portion of the Lime Creek Watershed, which drains into Anderson Ranch Reservoir in the South Fork Boise River Subbasin. The main streams in the area are Lime Creek, and the North, Middle, and South Forks of Lime Creek. There are no natural lakes or reservoirs. Water Quality Integrity ratings for the subwatersheds vary from moderate (functioning at risk) to low (not functioning appropriately), with the majority being moderate (see table below). Localized areas have depleted stream flows from irrigation uses, and accelerated sediment from roads, livestock grazing, and dispersed recreation. There are currently no impaired water bodies listed under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act or TMDL-assigned subwatersheds associated with this area.

Subwatershed Vulnerability			Geomorphic Integrity			Water Quality Integrity			No. 303(d) Subs	No. Subs With TMDLs	No. Public Water System Subs
High	Mod.	Low	High	Mod.	Low	High	Mod.	Low			
2	3	0	0	4	1	0	4	1	0	0	0

Anadromous fish species no longer occur within this area because downstream dams have blocked migration routes to and from the ocean. Bull trout, a Threatened species, may occur in the management area, although extensive recent surveys have not documented the occurrence of the species. Native redband trout are common in area streams. Kokanee salmon, introduced to

Anderson Reservoir, migrate upstream to spawn within the management area. Overall, aquatic habitat is functioning at risk in localized areas due to impacts from sedimentation and elevated summer water temperatures.

Vegetation - Vegetation is naturally patchy throughout much of the area, with islands of coniferous forest surrounded by open shrubland and sagebrush/grass communities. Lower and mid-elevations feature sagebrush/grasslands on south and west aspects. North and east aspects support Douglas-fir communities. Lodgepole pine occurs at these elevations in cold air drainages and frost-pockets. The subalpine fir zone occupies higher elevations. Sites within this zone are generally dry and support Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, and subalpine fir. Engelmann spruce occurs infrequently and is restricted to small areas that stay moist throughout the year or along waterways. Whitebark pine is found at the highest elevations interspersed with alpine meadows, rock bluffs, and talus slopes.

About 33 percent of the management area is non-forested, or covered by grasslands, shrublands, meadows, rock, or water. Much of this 33 percent is comprised of the Mountain Big Sagebrush and Montane Shrub vegetation groups. The main forested vegetation groups are Cool Dry Douglas-Fir (15 percent), Cool Moist Douglas-Fir (21 percent), Dry Ponderosa Pine/Xeric Douglas-Fir (13 percent), and Warm Dry Subalpine Fir (15 percent). Aspen and lodgepole pine are minor but important components in the warm dry subalpine fir and cool dry Douglas-fir groups.

The Montane Shrub and the Mountain Big Sagebrush groups are functioning at risk in some areas due to fire exclusion, tent caterpillar infestations, and historic grazing and trailing impacts, which have altered structure and species composition. Older, closed-canopy structure dominates.

High Elevation Subalpine Fir, though not abundant in this area, is functioning at risk due to fire exclusion that has allowed the more shade-tolerant subalpine fir to dominate, to the detriment of the whitebark pine component. The Dry Ponderosa Pine/Xeric Douglas-Fir, Warm Dry Subalpine Fir, and Cool Dry and Cool Moist Douglas-Fir groups are functioning at risk because fire exclusion has resulted in older, more decadent stands with more climax species and less early seral species, particularly aspen and lodgepole pine. Aspen is present in pure stands and mixed with Douglas-fir; however many stands are dying out or being replaced by conifers. Older aspen stands are infected with leaf blight and fungus, and are not regenerating satisfactorily. Fire hazard is increasing in conifers stands due to increasing mortality from mistletoe, Douglas-fir tussock moth, and Douglas-fir beetle.

Riparian vegetation is functioning at risk in localized areas due primarily to localized grazing impacts and fire exclusion. Wet meadow species are being replaced by dry grasses due to livestock grazing. Cottonwood and willow communities are becoming old and decadent, and are not regenerating due to fire exclusion and livestock impacts. Snag levels are likely below historic levels in some areas due to fuelwood gathering.

Botanical Resources - Bugleg goldenweed, a Region 4 Sensitive species, is found in this management area. No federally listed or proposed plant species are known to occur in the area, but potential habitat exists for Ute ladies'-tresses and slender moonwort. Ute ladies'-tresses, a

Threatened species, may have moderate to high potential habitat in riparian/wetland areas from 1,000 to 7,000 feet. Slender moonwort, a Candidate species, may occur in moderate to higher elevation grasslands, meadows, small openings in spruce and lodgepole pine, and open rocky outcrops.

Non-native Plants – A number of noxious weeds and exotic plants have been introduced into the area, particularly along main travel ways. The main weeds of concern are spotted and diffuse knapweed, rush skeletonweed, and leafy spurge, which currently occur in small, scattered populations. An estimated 40 percent of the area is highly susceptible to noxious weed and exotic plants establishment and spread.

Subwatersheds in the table below have an inherently high risk of weed establishment and spread from activities identified with a "yes" in the various activity columns. This risk is due to the amount of drainage area that is highly susceptible to noxious weed invasion and the relatively high level of exposure from those identified vectors or carriers of weed seed.

Subwatershed	Road-related Activities	Livestock Use	Timber Harvest	Recreation & Trail Use	ATV Off-Road Use
Lower Lime Creek	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
South Fork Lime-Hearn	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
North Fork Lime Creek	No	No	No	Yes	No

Wildlife Resources - The lower-elevation shrublands and forests provide big-game spring, summer, and fall range but are generally too high for winter range. Mid-elevation Douglas-fir forests provide habitat for two Region 4 Sensitive species, northern goshawk and flammulated owl. High-elevation subalpine forests provide habitat for boreal owl, three-toed woodpecker, and wolverine, as well as summer range for deer, elk, black bear, and mountain lion. Much of the area provides nesting and foraging habitat for migratory land birds, and general habitat for wide-ranging mammals such as elk, bear, and mountain lion. The area is within the Central Idaho Wolf Recovery Area, and wolves could occur here in the future. Overall, terrestrial habitat is functioning at risk in localized areas due primarily to impacts from roads and timber harvest. The level of human disturbance is low, and habitat fragmentation from roads, timber harvest, or fire is generally low, except for the upper North Fork Lime Creek drainage, which has many roads and harvest units.

Recreation Resources - The only developed recreation site in the area is the Hunter Creek Trailhead and parking area, used primarily by hunters, horseback riders, and off-road vehicle enthusiasts. The rest of the management area provides dispersed recreation opportunities year-round, including hunting, dispersed camping, mountain biking, motorbiking, and snowmobiling. There is an extensive trail system in the area, and most of the trails are open for motorized use. A portion of the Idaho Centennial Trail lies within this management area. Overall use is increasing, particularly ATV and snowmobile use. Most of the area is in Idaho Fish and Game Units 43 and 44. Many of the recreation users come from the Magic Valley, including the cities of Twin Falls, Jerome, and Gooding. There are recreation special use authorizations for two outfitter and guide operations in the area.

Cultural Resources – Cultural themes in this area include ranching, timber, and mining. No prehistoric sites are documented in the area. Historic use for timber and grazing occurred in the area. Some historic mining occurred in Hunter Creek.

Timberland Resources - Of the estimated 23,300 tentatively suited acres in this management area, 5,200 acres have been identified as being suited timberlands, or appropriate for timber production. This represents about 4 percent of the Forest's suited timberland acres. The suited timberland acres are found in MPCs 5.1 and 6.1, as shown on the map displaying the MPCs for this management area. Lands within MPC 4.1c are identified as not suited for timber production. The level of past timber management has been fairly high in roaded areas and low in the roadless portions. Forest products such as fuelwood, posts, and poles are collected in designated areas.

Rangeland Resources - The management area contains all or portions of two sheep and three cattle allotments. This area provides an estimated 12,700 acres of capable rangeland, which represents about 2 percent of capable rangeland on the Forest.

Mineral Resources - Some historic mining activity has occurred in the Hunter Creek drainage in the southern portion of the management area. No current mining activity occurs, and the potential for mineral development is considered low.

Fire Management - Prescribed fire has been used to reduce activity-generated fuels and dense mountain big sage. There are no National Fire Plan communities in this area, but South Fork Lime-Hearn is considered a wildland-urban interface subwatershed due to private development adjacent to the Forest. Historical fire regimes for the area are estimated to be 76 percent mixed1 or 2, and 24 percent non-lethal. Only 6 percent of the area regimes have vegetation conditions that are highly departed from their historical range. However, 36 percent of the area regimes have vegetation conditions that are moderately departed from their historical range. Wildfire in these areas may result in larger patch sizes of high intensity or severity, but not to the same extent as in the highly departed areas in non-lethal fire regimes.

Lands and Special Uses – There is a special use authorization for one radio repeater in the area.

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

In addition to Forest-wide Goals, Objectives, Standards, and Guidelines that provide direction for all management areas, the following direction has been developed specifically for this area.

Resource/Program	Direction	Number	Management Direction Description
MPC 4.1c	General Standard	0901	Management actions—including mechanical vegetation treatments, salvage harvest, wildland fire use, prescribed fire, special use authorizations, and road maintenance—must be designed and implemented in a manner that would be consistent with the unroaded landscape in the temporary, short term, and long term. Exceptions to this standard are actions in the 4.1c Roads standards, below.

Resource/Program	Direction	Number	Management Direction Description
MPC 4.1c Undeveloped Recreation: Maintain Unroaded Character with Allowance for Restoration	Road Standard	0902	Road construction or reconstruction may only occur where needed: a) To provide access related to reserved or outstanding rights, or b) To respond to statute or treaty.
	Fire Guideline	0903	The full range of fire suppression strategies may be used to suppress wildfires. Emphasize tactics that minimize impacts of suppression activities on the unroaded landscape in the area.
MPC 5.1 Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Forested Landscapes	Vegetation Guideline	0904	The full range of treatment activities may be used to restore and maintain desired vegetation and fuel conditions. The available vegetation treatment activities include wildland fire use. Salvage harvest may also occur.
	Fire Guideline	0905	The full range of fire suppression strategies may be used to suppress wildfires. Emphasize strategies and tactics that minimize impacts to habitats, developments, and investments.
	Road Guideline	0906	Road construction or reconstruction may occur where needed: a) To provide access related to reserved or outstanding rights, or b) To respond to statute or treaty, or c) To achieve restoration and maintenance objectives for vegetation, water quality, aquatic habitat, or terrestrial habitat; or d) To support management actions taken to reduce wildfire risks in wildland-urban interface areas; or e) To meet access and travel management objectives.
MPC 6.1 Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland and Grassland Landscapes	Vegetation Guideline	0907	The full range of treatment activities may be used to restore and maintain desired vegetation and fuel conditions. The available vegetation treatment activities include wildland fire use. Salvage harvest may also occur.
	Fire Guideline	0908	The full range of fire suppression strategies may be used to suppress wildfires. Emphasize strategies and tactics that minimize impacts to habitats, developments, and investments.
	Road Guideline	0909	Road construction or reconstruction may occur where needed: a) To provide access related to reserved or outstanding rights, or b) To respond to statute or treaty, or c) To achieve restoration and maintenance objectives for vegetation, water quality, aquatic habitat, or terrestrial habitat; or d) To support management actions taken to reduce wildfire risks in wildland-urban interface areas; or e) To meet access and travel management objectives.
Soil, Water, Riparian, and Aquatic Resources	Objective	0910	Improve water quality by reducing accelerated sediment from existing roads in upper North Fork and South Fork Lime Creek, Hunter Creek, and Maxfield Creek drainages.
	Objective	0911	Improve water quality through reconstruction or relocation of segments of the following trails that are contributing sediment: South Fork Lime Creek Trail, Middle Fork Lime Creek Trail, North Fork Lime Creek Trail, and Boardman Pass Trail.
	Objective	0912	Reduce soil compaction from dispersed camping, fishing, and cattle and sheep in wet meadows along the South, Middle, and North Forks of Lime Creek, Hunter Creek, and Maxfield Creek drainages.
	Objective	0913	Reduce the effects of soil erosion and gullying along the Lime Creek/Yuba River Sheep Driveway caused by historic livestock trailing. Restore soil conditions degraded by historic trailing use on the Hawk Gulch/Boadman Pass Sheep Driveway.

Resource/Program	Direction	Number	Management Direction Description
Soil, Water, Riparian, and Aquatic Resources	Objective	0914	Coordinate with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to maintain or improve native fish populations and currently unoccupied habitat by reducing the threat of hybridization and competition from non-native fish species.
Vegetation	Objective	0915	Restore or maintain the early seral aspen component to desired conditions, as described in Appendix A, to improve visual quality and wildlife habitat in the Hunter, Thompson, Maxfield and North Fork Lime Creek drainages.
	Objective	0916	Maintain or restore the whitebark pine component of the High Elevation Subalpine Fir vegetation group along Soldier Mountain Ridge to desired conditions, as described in Appendix A.
	Objective	0917	Restore the herbaceous plant ground cover component of the Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation group in the South and North Fork Lime Creek drainages.
Botanical Resources	Objective	0918	Maintain or restore populations and occupied habitats of TEPCS species, including bugleg goldenweed in Maxfield, Hunter, and Thompson Creek drainages, to contribute to their long-term viability of these species.
	Objective	0919	Emphasize reducing diffuse knapweed and hounds tongue within TEPCS plant occupied and potential habitat.
	Guideline	0920	Coordinate forested restoration, grassland/shrubland restoration, riparian restoration, prescribed fire, and non-native plant eradication with a Forest botanist to minimize impacts to TEPCS plant species, occupied or potential habitat, and pollinators of these species.
Non-native Plants	Objective	0921	Prevent, control, and eradicate noxious weeds, with emphasis on spotted and diffuse knapweeds, rush skeletonweed, hounds tongue, and leafy spurge. The elimination of leafy spurge is the highest priority.
Wildlife Resources	Objective	0922	Coordinate seasonal road closures with Idaho Department of Fish and Game to reduce elk vulnerability and disturbance.
	Objective	0923	Improve winter habitat security for mountain goats and wolverine in the headwaters areas of Middle and South Fork Lime Creeks by reducing disturbance from winter recreation activities.
	Guideline	0924	Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
Recreation Resources	Objective	0925	Maintain the Idaho Centennial Trail to a standard appropriate for its importance and intended use to help provide a unique trail opportunity and experience.
	Objective	0926	Consider decisions that enhance winter recreation opportunities and summertime recreation as viable income generators for residents in Camas County.
	Objective	0927	Provide snowmobiling opportunities outside of lynx habitat to help meet this winter recreation use demand.
	Objective	0928	Develop a dispersed recreation site plan to address soil compaction and vegetation restoration needs in Cow Creek and Hunter Creek drainages.

<table>
<tr><th>Resource/Program</th><th>Direction</th><th>Number</th><th>Management Direction Description</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Recreation Resources</td><td>Objective</td><td>0929</td><td>Reduce soil erosion and sedimentation associated with off-road vehicles on the South Fork Lime Creek Trail, Middle Fork Lime Creek Trail, North Fork Lime Creek Trail, and Boardman Pass Trail.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective</td><td>0930</td><td>Evaluate and incorporate methods to help prevent weed establishment and spread from recreation and trail use in the South Fork Lime-Hearn and North Fork Lime Creek subwatersheds. Methods to consider include annual weed inspection and treatment of trailheads and other high-use areas; and posting educational notices in these areas to inform the public of areas that are susceptible to weed invasion and measures they can take to help prevent weed establishment and spread.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective</td><td>0931</td><td>Achieve or maintain the following ROS strategy:
<table><tr><th rowspan="2">ROS Class</th><th colspan="2">Percent of Mgt. Area</th></tr><tr><th>Summer</th><th>Winter</th></tr><tr><td>Semi-Primitive Motorized</td><td>79%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>Roaded Natural</td><td>4%</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Roaded Modified</td><td>17%</td><td>0%</td></tr></table>
The above numbers reflect current travel regulations. These numbers may change as a result of future travel regulation planning</td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective</td><td>0932</td><td>Evaluate and incorporate methods to help prevent weed establishment and spread from off-road ATV/motorbike use and other concentrated recreation use in the Lower Lime Creek and South Fork Lime-Hearn subwatersheds. Methods to consider include annual weed inspection and treatment of trailheads, campgrounds, and other high use areas; and posting educational notices in these areas to inform the public of areas that are highly susceptible to weed invasion and measures they can take to help prevent weed establishment and spread.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Timberland Resources</td><td>Objective</td><td>0933</td><td>Identify Douglas-fir stands in North Fork Lime Creek that have conditions that predispose them to epidemic insect activity and stand-replacing fire. Initiate actions to treat stand densities and hazardous fuel conditions to reduce insect and wildfire hazards.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Rangeland Resources</td><td>Objective</td><td>0934</td><td>Restore ground cover, reduce sediment contributions, and restore streambank vegetative composition in drainages with bull trout habitat and 303d listed streams (Cow Creek) through adjustments to livestock grazing capacities and management.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective</td><td>0935</td><td>Evaluate and incorporate methods to help prevent weed establishment and spread from livestock grazing activities in the Lower Lime Creek and South Fork Lime-Hearn subwatersheds. Methods to consider include changes in the timing, intensity, duration, or frequency of livestock use; the location of salting; and restoration of watering sites.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective</td><td>0936</td><td>Whenever possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore natural free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage grouse habitat.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Standard</td><td>0937</td><td>Forage utilization by cattle in riparian areas will not exceed 30 percent use of most palatable forage species, or must retain a minimum 6 inch stubble height of native hydric greenline species, whichever occurs first, when riparian goals and objectives are not being met.</td></tr>
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Resource/Program	Direction	Number	Management Direction Description
Rangeland Resources	Guideline	0938	When constructing new fences or reconstructing existing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.
Fire Management	Objective	0939	Use prescribed fire and/or mechanical treatments within and adjacent to the wildland/urban interface area in South Fork Lime-Hearn subwatershed to manage fuels and reduce wildfire hazards. Develop and prioritize vegetation treatment plans for wildland-urban interface in coordination with local and tribal governments, agencies, and landowners.
	Objective	0940	Identify areas appropriate for Wildland Fire Use. Use wildland fire to restore or maintain desired vegetative conditions and to reduce fuel loadings.
	Objective	0941	Coordinate and emphasize fire education and prevention programs with private landowners to help reduce wildfire hazard and risk.
	Guideline	0942	Coordinate with the Boise National Forest to develop compatible wildfire suppression strategies and coordinated plans for wildland fire use.
Lands and Special Uses	Objective	0943	Obtain additional public and administrative access to the Hunter Creek drainage to enhance recreation opportunities and management of public lands.
	Objective	0944	Consider acquiring isolated parcels of private and State lands in T. 1 N., R. 11 E. and T 1 N, R 12 E. Consider disposal of isolated parcels of National Forest lands in T. 1 N., R. 11 E. and T. 1 S., R. 11 E. to create a more manageable landownership pattern.
Facilities and Roads	Objective	0945	Evaluate and incorporate methods to help prevent weed establishment and spread from road management activities in the South Fork Lime-Hearn subwatershed. Methods to consider include: ➢ When decommissioning roads, treat weeds before roads are made impassable. ➢ Schedule road maintenance activities when weeds are least likely to be viable or spread. Blade from least to most infested sites. ➢ Consult or coordinate with the district noxious weed coordinator when scheduling road maintenance activities. ➢ Periodically inspect road systems and rights of way. ➢ Avoid accessing water for dust abatement through weed-infested sites, or utilize mitigation to minimize weed seed transport.